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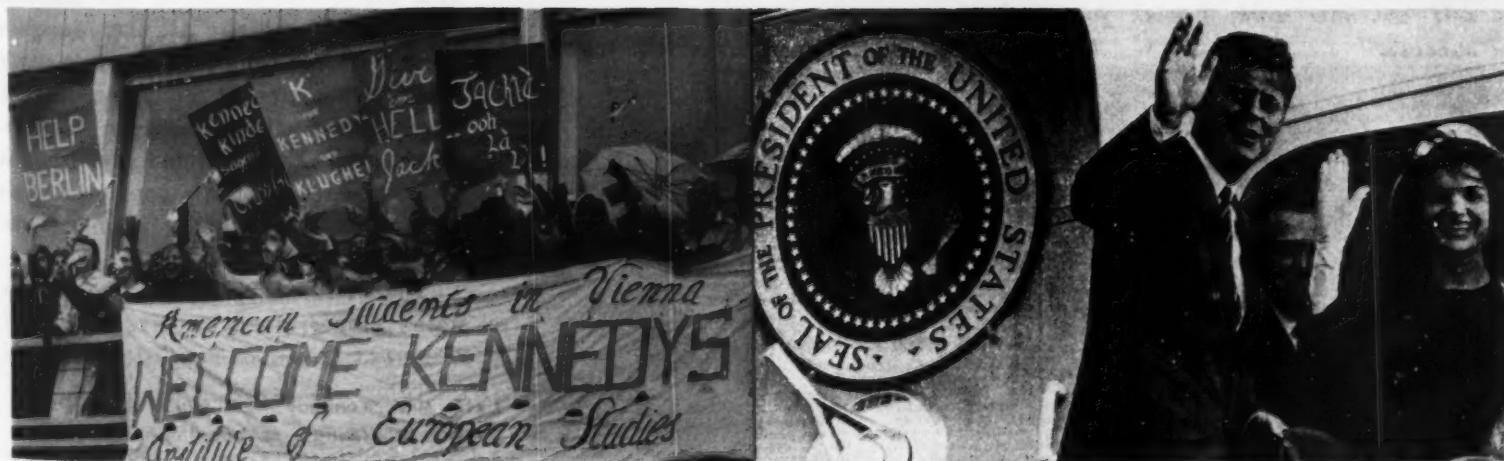
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SUMMIT UNDER THE CHESTNUT TREES



Top left: President John F. Kennedy and Premier Nikita Khrushchev during conversation at the American Embassy. — Top right: Mrs. Kennedy in conversation with Mr. Khrushchev during gala dinner at Schoenbrunn castle. — Bottom left: American students greet the Kennedy's at Schwechat airport. — Bottom right: The presidential guests leave Vienna for London. (For more pictures and story on the historic meeting turn to page 2.)

In Schoenbrunn castle's music hall on the evening of June 3. Left to right: Premier Khrushchev, Mrs. Kennedy, President Schaerf, Mrs. Khrushchev, Mr. Kennedy.

SUMMIT UNDER THE CHESTNUT TREES

The sky was overcast when President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy's jet landed at Vienna's Schwechat airport on June 3 at 10:45 A.M. But the distinguished guests were warmly greeted by Austrian President Adolf Schaerf, Federal Chancellor Alfons Gorbach, Vice-Chancellor Bruno Pittermann, Foreign Minister Bruno Kreisky and other representatives, among them members of Vienna's American colony. President Schaerf welcomed the President with the following words:

Schaerf Greets President

"I am very happy to be able to welcome you in Austria. You are the first United States President to visit Austria while in office."

"We know that you will have had many and important reasons to come here."

"Diplomacy today is not only carried out by diplomats, but also through personal contacts. And we Austrians are pleased that you, Mr. President, did not spare the effort to choose Austria as the stage for your talks with Premier Khrushchev."

"I myself, and I believe many Austrians, millions of Europeans and the peoples of our globe wish that your talks will be crowned by success. This we wish from the bottom of our heart."

"Your stay here will be short. That is why I cannot offer you much. For yourself and your work, I wish you much success."



President Kennedy replied with the following statement:

The President's Reply

"Thank you, indeed. Thank you. I want to express my appreciation for your generous welcome. Twenty years ago, twenty-one years ago, I spent nearly a month in Klagenfurt am Woerthersee in your beautiful country and, therefore, I am delighted to have an opportunity to visit here again. We are very grateful to the City of Vienna and to the Government of Austria for the hospitality which they have afforded us for permitting us to meet on this most important occasion in an effort to improve the prospects for more general understanding between people."

"So I wish to thank you again on behalf of my wife and myself and to say that we are proud to be in your country. Thank you."

Following these addresses a military band played the national anthems and the two Presidents inspected the Honor

Guard. A large crowd lined the route to the Imperial Hofburg Palace where Mr. Kennedy paid his respects to the Austrian President and where the official introduction took place. After prolonged private talks; the two statesmen, accompanied by Secretary of State Dean Rusk and members of the Austrian government, appeared on the balcony to greet the cheering crowd who had assembled in Hero Square before the palace. Mr. Kennedy arrived at 12:45 P.M. at the American Embassy to start his historic talks with Premier Nikita Khrushchev.

The President's Wife

Even before the President, Jacqueline Kennedy had left the Hofburg accompanied by President Schaerf's daughter, Mrs. Martha Kyrle, and had been driven to the embassy. During the Kennedy-Khrushchev talks Mrs. Nina Khrushchev visited the Cezanne exhibition and Mrs. Kennedy went sight seeing. Lunch was taken at the Kerzenstueberl. At the Augarten china factory (See photo) Vienna's Mayor Franz Jonas greeted Mrs. Kennedy and presented her with an Augarten vase, designed and hand painted by Isabella Braedanaicher. Vienna's population greeted her enthusiastically wherever she appeared.

The first day's visit ended with a states dinner given by President Adolf Schaerf at Schoenbrunn castle. (Ctd p. 5)

Left: Mrs. Kennedy with Major Alois Podhaysky at Vienna's famous "Spanish Riding School." — Right: At Augarten Porcelain Factory. Mrs. Kennedy holding vase which Vienna's Mayor Franz Jonas (center) presented to her. On right is Deputy Mayor Hans Mandl.



A LIFE FOR AUSTRIA

FEDERAL CHANCELLOR ALFONS GORBACH

(The following biographical notes on Austria's new Federal Chancellor are published upon the request of many readers of
AUSTRIAN INFORMATION.)

Federal Chancellor Dr. Alfons Gorbach was born at Imst (Tyrol) on September 2, 1898. Two years later his parents moved to Woerschach, Styria, where he grew up. In 1916 he voluntarily joined the services as one year recruit. In 1917 during the twelfth battle on the Isonzo he was seriously wounded and lost his right leg. After having retired from active military service as a reserve lieutenant he studied law in Graz and received his LLD degree in December 1922.

At a relatively early time Dr. Gorbach began to take an active part in the political life of the City of Graz and the Province of Styria. He became municipal school supervisor in Graz, member of the Styrian diet and eventually member of the Provincial Government of Styria. Immediately after the Anschluss, in March 1938, he was arrested by the Nazis and on April 1 taken to the Dachau concentration camp. In autumn 1943, Dr. Gorbach was released from the concentration camp and then conscripted for service as metal laborer in Graz. In August 1944 he was sent to Dachau again where, after the liberation by American troops, he acted as chairman of the Austrian committee for the repatriation for the Austrian detainees so that he could not return to Austria until the beginning of July 1945. Immediately after his return to Graz he put himself at the disposal of the People's Party. As leader of the party ticket in his constituency he was delegated to the National Assembly in November 1945 where he was elected third President.

He resigned this position on April 11, 1961 when he took office as Austrian Federal Chancellor. Since February 13, 1960 Dr. Gorbach has been Federal chairman of the Austrian People's Party.

His attitude after the Second World War, when he pleaded for the misled and deluded of the time between 1938 and 1945, has sometimes been misinterpreted. He himself, when questioned how he, a many-years occupant of a concentration camp, could have become the advocate of reconciliation and justice, gave the following answer: On July 7, 1945 I returned from the Dachau concentration camp, where after the liberation I had acted as chairman of the Austrian detainees, to my father's home at Woerschach in the valley of the Enns. There I was greeted like one who had risen from death. On the very same day, a farmer came to me whose young son had been with the SS and who feared now for his further fate. He asked me, the former concentration camp detainee, to speak up for his son and to help. Then I began to realize fully the tragic



Alfons Gorbach

plight of our time and reflected: Good Lord, how long shall this go on? How often shall triumph and defeat, victory and persecution alternate with each other? When finally will the people find peace? I thought of my wife and my daughter and their fears and anxieties each time I was arrested by the Nazis. Then I said to myself: We must at last restore peace in our country! And that was the moment, Dr. Gorbach continued, when I decided the work towards a policy of justice and reconciliation. Anybody who has offended against the timeless laws of humanity, who has mistreated or even killed another person shall be called to account. But I was also determined to plead for those who had been misled or had acted under force, to be pardoned and be accepted as equals among their fellow-citizens."

In the middle of July 1945, after the withdrawal of the Soviet Troops from Styria, Dr. Gorbach became acting Chairman of the People's Party in that province. On November 25, 1945 the first elections for the National Assembly were held which brought the party a great success. Dr. Gorbach who became the leading representative of the Styrian People's Party in the National Assembly was elected its third president in the first constituent meeting. From then on, he has always been among the top-ranking politicians of the Austrian People's Party.

However, Dr. Gorbach did not become a politician only after the Second World War. In the story of his life — private and political — the great events of the time are mirrored from the days of the Monarchy through the First World War, the interwar period and the Second World War up to our days. His is a typical Austrian career. We find in him an amicable, cheerful, humorous character who in spite of all his sufferings and his disillusionments has not become an embittered man fighting against his own fate; he is neither a hater nor an ascetic but an Austrian with all the typical Austrian traits: Dr. Gorbach is very sociable, loves the company of good friends and possesses the rare gift to be able to entertain.

One might think that his political leanings leave him no time for other "hobbies". Far from it: in his youth Dr. Gorbach was an active member in his track and field club in Graz and an enthusiastic football fan. Even to-day when his duties permit it, he can be found on the grounds of his favorite football club wishing his team good luck. Apart from sports his main interest is devoted to reading and literary works. For him as a friend of historical books and political memoirs there is, in his belief, too little time for indulging in that "passion". "I could not think of a better occupation at the end of my career than to search around in the libraries of Graz and to read" he says himself about this side of his private self.

(Continued on reverse side)

If one says Dr. Gorbach is a typical Austrian this is also true as regards his descent. There is practically no federal province with which he is not personally connected somehow. His father who was a teacher and farmer at Fluk came from Vorarlberg; his mother came from Huettau, in the province of Salzburg. His parents had five children of whom the oldest son took over the father's farm. Later on, his father entered the railway service and moved at the same time to Imst in Tyrol, where he served as station master. At Imst, Alfons Gorbach was born on the 2nd of September 1898. Only two years later his parents moved to Styria where they took residence at Woerschach in the Enns valley. After the death of his parents their home was taken over by a sister of his and even today he and his brothers and sisters meet regularly there. After Vorarlberg, Salzburg, Tyrol and Styria he became connected with Carinthia by serving during the First World War in the Carinthian home regiment. Owing to his political activity Dr. Gorbach for many years found his second residence in the Federal capital of Vienna. Upper Austria finally has become the home of his married daughter who lives in Linz where Dr. Gorbach often spends his weekends.

In 1916, only 17½ years old, Gorbach voluntarily joined the service of the Infantry Regiment No. 7, the Carinthian home regiment. On the Italian front, during the 12th battle on the Isonzo, he got the order (Nov. 5, 1917) to assault a machine gun nest of the enemy in the Isonzo valley. During the night, however, the Italians made a counter-attack and his group got into concentrated machine gun fire. Gorbach alone survived.

He was, however, severely wounded and only by the amputation of his right leg his life could be saved. Having become unfit for active military service Gorbach continued his studies in Graz and passed the leaving-examination. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant, and for his fighting morale as platoon-commander he was awarded with the silver medals for bravery, first and second class.

In 1918 Gorbach enrolled at the Department of Law of the University of Graz where he obtained his LLD degree in 1922. He turned to the civil service career and worked with the Disabled Soldiers Indemnification Commission in Graz

where he soon became head of the juridical department. In 1924 he married his wife Maria, a native of Graz. In 1925 his only daughter was born and given the rare Christian name of Alfonsa. As daughter of a prominent anti-Nazi and concentration camp detainee she was not admitted to come up for the leaving-examination during the time of Hitler; later on, however, she finished her secondary school studies, enrolled at the university and obtained the doctorate in political science. At present she lives at Linz, is married and mother of three children — Michael, Elisabeth and Stefan.

His first steps in the political field were taken by Dr. Gorbach in Graz in March 1928. In the Styrian capital the young civil servant who had spoken at party rallies had aroused attention; consequently his name was entered as the fifteenth on the list of christian-social candidates for the municipal council at Graz. This was more of a trial than a sure start, for at that time the christian-social election strategists counted only on 14 "sure" municipal council seats. To everybody's surprise there were really 15 seats won and thus Gorbach was elected. Soon he advanced from the municipal to the provincial level and eventually became a member of the Provincial Government of Styria in which for years he attended to school matters. In 1934 Gorbach was elected leader of the Patriotic Front for Styria.

On March 16, 1938, Dr. Gorbach was arrested by the Nazis in Vienna. After three days interrogation by the SS Dr. Gorbach was brought to the concentration camp of Dachau by the first transport of Austrian politicians on April 1, 1938. It is interesting to note that the whole presidium of the Austrian Parliament at present is composed of men who were members of that first Dachau transport.

At Dachau Dr. Gorbach remained till November 12, 1943, when he was dismissed to Graz. Then he was conscripted for service as laborer (electric winder) in an armament plant. After the attempt on Hitler's life on July 20, 1944, he was rearrested and brought again to the concentration camp of Flossenbürg and, later on, of Dachau. The termination of hostilities and the liberation of the detainees by American troops brought his sufferings to an end.

DR. KAMITZ IN U.S.

Dr. Reinhard Kamitz, president of the Austrian National Bank, spent the second week of May in New York to discuss international financial problems with leading personalities in the commercial and investment banking field. Subsequently, he spent two days in Washington where he discussed mutual problems with leading officials on the U.S. Treasury Department and other financial and economic authorities. Dr. Kamitz conferred, among others, with Robert W. Roosa, undersecretary of the Treasury, Walt W. Rostow, President Kennedy's expert for foreign economic questions, and with Walter Heller, chairman of the President's Economic Council.

Kamitz also met with a number of officials of the Federal Reserve System and the American Banknote Authority. Finally, he held talks with the director general of the International Currency Fund.

FINLAND'S PRESIDENT IN VIENNA

President Urho Kekkonen of Finland arrived in Vienna for an official State visit of several days on May 29.

The statesman who is accompanied by his wife was cordially received by Austrian Federal President Dr. Schaerf and other high ranking officials. After exchanging courtesy calls the Finnish guests visited the secular and the ecclesiastical treasures as well as the Museum of Art and participated in a gala dinner in their honor which was followed by a reception in the festive rooms of Schoenbrunn Castle. The President visited the famous Spanish Riding School which he described as "the world's most beautiful." Later on he inspected the VOEST Steel Works in Linz which at present builds four highway bridges for Finland.

Mr. and Mrs. Kekkonen left Vienna June 1. Taking leave, the Finnish President thanked Federal Chancellor Schaerf

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and his party for the warm reception he had received and assured them that he was most impressed by the country's beauty and by everything he had observed during his stay in Austria.

NEGOTIATIONS ON THE SOUTH TYROL TO RESUME JUNE 24

The Austrian-Italian negotiations concerning the South Tyrol which were held in Klagenfurt on May 24 were interrupted after two days of conversation and shall be resumed in Zurich, Switzerland on June 24.

Austria's Foreign Minister, Dr. Bruno Kreisky, who headed his country's delegation, summarized the result of the Klagenfurt talks as follows:

"No practical progress has been made in Klagenfurt. However, if you want to solve a problem, the fact alone that the position of the parties concerned has been further clarified is of a certain value."

The minister stressed that Austria's position has not changed. Austria could still visualize a solution of the problem only by a change of the present autonomous status and by transferring certain administrative competences to the province of Bolzano. A change of the respective clauses in the Italian constitution by the Italian parliament seems to be the best solution. Pre-World War II Europe had perished because "too little has been done too late." Therefore, the best would be, if concessions have to be made, to make them quickly.

Dr. Kreisky added that it was not the intention of the Austrian government to create a conflict but to find ways for an agreement.

Assistant Secretary of State Dr. Ludwig Steiner who participated in the negotiations declared: The gratifying result of the Klagenfurt negotiations is undoubtedly the fact that for the first time we could sit down with our Italian counterparts to a concrete discussion of Austria's demands. Although the gap between the respective viewpoints could not be narrowed, it is hoped the now following discussions of the experts will have created more favorable conditions for the resumption of negotiations at the end of this month.

In the meantime, the Austrian and Italian experts will not conduct negotiations in the usual sense of this word. They will study the technical potentialities for future decisions based on the Austrian and Italian concept of the South Tyrol question. However, Dr. Steiner concluded, on June 24 a decision must be made. At the present stage of our negotiations everything is still undecided and, therefore, we must be cautious not to be too optimistic.

Informed sources report that the Klagenfurt negotiations took place in a much better climate than the one previously conducted in Milan and that Italy showed a certain willingness to make concessions, which might lead to a broadening of the administrative competences in Bolzano province. On the other hand, the Italians appeared still adamant as far as a change of the autonomous status is concerned which Austria is seeking.

ANDREAS HOFER STATUE DYNAMITED

The night preceding the start of negotiations between Austria and Italy concerning The South Tyrol, a monument honoring Andreas Hofer was blown up in Mantua. The monument stood at the spot where the Tyrolean freedom fighter faced Napoleon's firing squad in 1810.

According to newspaper reports nobody was injured and the perpetrator has not been apprehended. Among the ruins a sheet of paper was found bearing the inscription *Corpi Franchi Italiani* (Italian Freedom Corps).

KENNEDY - KHRUSHCHEV (Continued from page 2)

The Gala Dinner

More than 6,000 Viennese crowded around the floodlit gates of the 267-year-old Schoenbrunn Palace, to watch the leaders of East and West enter. When the President and Mrs. Kennedy arrived the Viennese hailed "The American Princess".

During the evening Mr. Kennedy talked quite lengthy with Mrs. Khrushchev, while Premier Khrushchev entertained Mrs. Kennedy telling her anecdotes.

President Schaerf solved a difficult problem of protocol by deciding that during the dinner, Mrs. Khrushchev was to be seated at his right while during the second half of the evening's activities in the music room, Mrs. Kennedy would occupy this honored spot,

The Second Day

The President of the United States and Mrs. Kennedy started their second day in Vienna with a mass at the Saint Stephens Cathedral. Afterwards Mr. Kennedy met Mr. Khrushchev at the Soviet Embassy for the second round of talks. The two statesmen had luncheon at the Soviet Embassy while the ladies were given a luncheon by Mrs. Martha Kyrle, the Austrian President's daughter, at the Pallavicine Palace. A crowd of about thousand spectators jammed the little square hailing the two ladies at their arrival, and when they appeared hand in hand on the balcony.

FROM PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S REPORT TO THE NATION

In his report to the nation, televised and broadcasted from Washington, D.C., on June 6 at 7:00 P.M., President Kennedy made the following remarks about his reception in Vienna:

"The people of Vienna know what it is to live under occupation and they know what it is to live in freedom. Their welcome to me as President of this country should be heartwarming to us all."

When the President and Mrs. Kennedy left for London in the afternoon, the President thanked Federal President Adolf Schaerf and other members of the Austrian government at Schwechat airport for the warm welcome he had received in Vienna and expressed his great appreciation to the Government of Austria, to the Mayor and the people of Vienna. He said in part: "Twenty-one years elapsed between my only two visits to this ancient city and I hope that less time will pass between this and my next visit." The President said he had been most anxious to come to Vienna and see for himself that it was possible to solve problems in a way that the interests of all people concerned be protected.

SUMMER FESTIVALS IN AUSTRIA

BRUCKNER FESTIVAL IN UPPER AUSTRIA

Austria's Bruckner Society has planned an extensive festival from July 2 to 9 in Linz and St. Florian, two towns closely connected with the composer's life. The "Sacred Week" will start July 2 at 10 a. m. with the performance of



Anton Bruckner

Anton Bruckner's Mass in E-minor in St. Florian's collegiate church under the baton of Joseph Kronsteiner. In the afternoon Walter Pach will play on the Bruckner organ and the evening will bring a symphony concert in St. Florian's marble hall conducted by Kurt Woess.

The following day Ludwig Daxperger will perform Bruckner's Mass in D-minor in the

Linz cathedral. The composer's Seventh Symphony (Vienna Philharmonic under Wolfgang Sawallisch) and chamber works will also be performed. Leopold Nowak and Msgr. Theodor Rehmann will lecture on various aspects of Bruckner's works.

In addition compositions — partly first performances — by Josef Friedrich Doppelbauer, Otto Jochum, Joseph Kronsteiner, Kropfreiter, Franz Schubert and Richard Wagner will be heard. The Graz, Nuremberg and Vienna orchestras will be conducted by Erich Kloss, Ernst Hinreiner and Wilhelm Jerger.

AMERICAN FESTIVAL BALLET AT GRAZ SUMMER FESTIVAL

The American Festival Ballet will give two performances during this year's Graz Summer Festival (June 17 to July 9). The opening night will bring the first performance of Waldemar



Clock Tower in Graz

Bloch's *Der Diener zweier Herren* (The servant of two masters). Later on Mozarts *Don Giovanni* will be heard among various operatic performances. Ference Fricsay will conduct the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Anton Lippe and Fritz Rieger the Munich Philharmonic, Guenther Wicha the Graz Philharmonic. Chamber music will be offered by the Los Angeles Strings, the Lucca Marenzio Sextett, the Hungarian Tatrai Chamber Orchestra. Shakespeare's "Midsummer Night's Dream" will be one of the plays to be performed during the festivals.

SCIENCE AND THE ARTS

THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC'S SEASON FOR 1961/62

Following last season's precedent to invite one composer to conduct one of its concerts the Vienna Philharmonic announced that in the coming season Werner Egk (following Aram Khatchaturian) will be the so honored guest. He will conduct his own compositions and works of other composers. The full schedule for the ten concert subscription series reads as follows:

Sept. 24, 1961	— Rafael Kubelik
Oct. 29,	— Hans Knappertsbusch
Nov. 12,	— Georg Solti
Nov. 26,	— Herbert Karajan
Jan. 14, 1962	— Werner Egk
Feb. 4,	— Mario Rossi
Feb. 18,	— Hans Knappertsbusch
March 4,	— Carl Schuricht
March 18,	— Herbert Karajan
April 29,	— Karl Boehm

YUGOSLAV SCULPTOR IVAN MESTROVIC HONORED BY AUSTRIA

The well-known Yugoslav sculptor Ivan Mestrovic, at present professor at the college of arts and letters at Notre Dame University, South Bend, Indiana, received the Austrian Medal for Science and Art. Many of the artist's works are in Austrian collections. Mestrovic is an honorary citizen of Vienna and an honorary member of the Austrian Academy for the Performing Arts.

UNITED STATES INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN VIENNA'S EUROPEAN ART EXHIBIT

The largest international art exhibition since the end of World War II will be held in Vienna from May to July, 1962. Fifteen experts from European countries met recently with their Austrian colleagues in preparation of this event which promises to be the largest in this kind of European history. If the concept of the planners materialize, art treasures (paintings, sculptures, textiles, coins, handicrafts) from Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, England, Italy among other countries will be brought together. Hope was expressed that the United States would also participate.

The 8. *Europaratausstellung* (Eighth Exhibition of the Council for Europe) will show "European Art Around 1400." The period chosen has its special significance. It is the time when the incunabula flourished, precious religious relics were

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created, when man's attitude toward God changed and the art of portrait painting was — as a crowning achievement — enshrined in the triptychs of the churches. Delicate works were wrought from gold and silver for churches and courts and the thriving burghers started to take their place among the connoisseurs and benefactors of the arts.

ELITE OF ATOM SCIENTISTS TO MEET AT SALZBURG

Salzburg will house the world's elite of peaceful atom scientists from September 4 through 8, 1961.

At an informal meeting with the press Professor Lisowski, Chief for scientific conferences of the Atomic Energy Authority, revealed that the Salzburg convention concerning research on "Physics of Plasma and Controlled Nuclear Fusion" will be the most important meeting of the Authority in 1961.

Professor Buras of the University of Warsaw will be the scientific director of the conference. He will be assisted by one adviser each from the USA, Russia and France.

Approximately 300 scientists from all parts of the world are expected to participate in the congress as official delegates of their respective governments.

Experts believe that this number is almost too high because there are hardly 300 people in the world who are in a position to add something fundamentally new to the subject of the Salzburg congress.

Another conference of the Atomic Energy Authority is planned for March 1962 in Salzburg.

AUSTRIA'S POPULATION ABOVE SEVEN MILLION MARK

Austria, scarred by two World Wars and economically shaken by inflation and labor unrest in the thirties, has had a nearly stagnant population during the last decades. Today, with economic stability and widespread prosperity prevailing, the nation looks with optimism into the future.

This apparently is proved by the results of the official census taken last March. For the first time the Austrian population totals over seven million, reaching 7,060,133. This means an increase of 126,228 or nearly 2% over the last ten years (6,933,905 in 1951). This trend is expected to accelerate since the standard of living in Austria promises to continue its upswing.

THREE AUSTRIAN EXPLORERS OFF TO CANADA

The Austrian mountain climbers Hans Gsellmann, Willy Schmidt and Sepp Weber flew recently to Montreal and proceeded from there on a four months expedition into Canada's Northwest Territory. The three explorers intend to navigate in a collapsible boat the whole length (app. 1,250 miles) of the Mackenzie river to its estuary at the Arctic Ocean.

It will be Mr. Gsellmann's, who heads the group, fifth expedition having been before twice in Spitzbergen, once in Alaska and twice in Greenland where he learned in the country's eastern part the original language spoken there by a few surviving pure blooded Eskimos.

Along the sparsely populated Mackenzie river — a fort every 250 miles — the explorers will climb mountains not to be reached by land, they will study the Indians' living conditions, their fishing and hunting reindeer. When the reindeers were threatened by extinction, 6000 of them were driven in a five year trek (1929 to 1934) to the Mackenzie estuary reservation.

AUSTRIA TODAY — AS SEEN BY AN AMERICAN NEWSMAN

(*Wilbur Elston, Editorial writer of the Minneapolis Star, reported in the May 4 edition of his newspaper on the impressions he gained during a visit to Austria. With the kind permission of the Star's editorial department, we reprint Elston's article below. Ed.*)

AUSTRIA ADAPTS TO NEUTRAL PROSPERITY

By *Wilbur Elston*

Ancient Austria, with a long tradition of leadership in European affairs, is now becoming accustomed to its unaccustomed role as a prosperous neutral nation.

When Austria was liberated from Nazi Germany after the war, many experts were pessimistic about its future as a viable economy. But with the help of about a billion American dollars in Marshall plan aid and the co-operation of the other Marshall plan countries, the hard-working Austrians put themselves back on their economic feet.

As a result, Austria today shares in the prosperity that is characteristic of western European countries. If the country has worries, they are largely on the ways and means of preserving both its prosperity and its neutrality.

Thus there is some concern in Austrian governmental circles about the current competition between the Common Market and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries. They think one division of Europe — between East and West — is sufficient.

As a member of EFTA which has strong trade ties with the Common Market nations — West Germany is Austria's best customer and market — Austria would like to see a bridge created between the two trading blocs.

Yet Austria also is concerned about the possible loss of sovereignty that would be involved in joining the Common Market in which, because the majority rules, Austria would lack the veto all EFTA members possess.

Invaded by the Nazis in 1938 and forcibly annexed to Germany, Austria prizes the independence it recaptured after World War II. The allies continued to occupy Austria until 1955 because of the intransigence of the Russians who insisted that allied troops had to remain here until a German peace treaty was signed.

The Russians apparently feared another *anschluss* between Austria and Germany, but they finally agreed to accept the kind of neutrality adopted by Switzerland. In return, a treaty was signed and the allied troops of all four occupation powers pulled out.

While nothing in the peace treaty spells out Austria's neutrality, the day after the last foreign soldier left Austria on Oct. 25, 1955, the Austrian parliament passed a law stipulating Austria's neutrality in these words:

"With a view to preserving an independent foreign policy and the inviolability of her territory, Austria of her own free will hereby declares her permanent neutrality which she is resolved to maintain and defend with all the means at her disposal. To this end, Austria will henceforth refrain from joining any military bases on her territory."

The Austrians also were required to make heavy economic payments to the Russians under the treaty and some of

the reparations still are going on. An immediate payment of two million dollars was made in 1955 for the Danube Steam Navigation company. Payments of 150 million dollars a year in goods were made for six years to repay Russia for plants taken over in 1945 as German assets, the final payment just having been made this year.

The heaviest obligation was the delivery to Russia of one million tons of oil yearly for a 10-year period which was required for the return of the oil wells, concessions and refineries which had been in the Soviet zone. In 1958, however, the Russians apparently for political purposes, agreed to ship back to Austria 500,000 tons of Soviet oil — the equivalent of half the scheduled Austrian deliveries — from 1958 until 1965.

Yet Austria has surged ahead in spite of the heavy obligations imposed on a nation of but seven million people. Part of the explanation lies in the fact that the Nazi occupation, hard as it was on the Austrians, had helped to unify the leaders of Austria's competing political parties. The Nazis also had started in Austria an industrial development that is now the base of its prosperity.

Yet this prosperity is closely allied with Austria's neutrality. For the Iron Curtain is less than 50 miles from Vienna, and Austria shares a common border for 600 miles with three Communist nations, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Yugoslavia.

This Iron Curtain, and the Communist lack of products to

sell to Austria, limits Austria's trade with the eastern bloc. Altogether, Austria's exports to the eastern European countries was only about 14 per cent of the total last year. Austria would be willing to sell more, but finds it difficult to buy what it needs through the bilateral agreements the Communist nations require.

And even though Austria is resolved to defend its neutrality — and its new chancellor, Dr. Alfons Gorbach, has just reiterated that pledge — it has only a small army of about 50,000 men, only a few planes and is prohibited by treaty from having nuclear weapons.

The Austrian people still take a rather negative view toward defense — which may be understandable in view of their geographical location — but they are stoutly anti-Communist and pro-western in their political outlook.

In fact, newspapermen enjoy free speech to such an extent here that occasionally editors hear suggestions from government officials about toning down their anti-Communist line to avoid offending the Soviet Union. But the Communists polled at most only 5 per cent of the vote in the country even when the Soviet Union occupied part of Austria after the war. And in 1959 the Communists failed to elect even a single member of parliament.

So today Austria is neutral and prosperous — but also is anti-Communist and pro-western — which perhaps is all that can be asked by the West of a nation in its location on the borders of the Communist empire.

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